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January 9, 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: V. V. Kuznetsov's Call on You January 9

You have agreed to receive Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov at 5 p.m. January 9. He will be accompanied by Ambassador Dobrynin. Ambassador Thompson will also be present.

We regard this as primarily a courtesy call following the completion of Kuznetsov's mission in New York. Nevertheless, there are certain matters which you may wish to raise or which Kuznetsov may raise.

With regard to the New York negotiations, you may wish to say that you appreciate the helpful and courteous attitude which Kuznetsov displayed throughout, which contributed importantly to the constructive atmosphere in which the negotiations were conducted.

You may also wish to say that you have noted how the U.S. press and radio have been interpreting the joint letter submitted to the U.N. Secretary General as a withholding on our part of your pledge not to invade Cuba. You may wish to say that you are sorry these stories have appeared and to reiterate, as you did with Mikoyan, that the United States does not intend to invade Cuba, unless there is some aggressive act by Castro, and is not moving back from any position agreed to in your correspondence with Chairman Khrushchev. There has been no change on the part of the United States from the position you set forth in your press conference of November 20 (which Kuznetsov and others have said they understood).

Kuznetsov may seek to ascertain what United States policy will be toward Cuba now that the United Nations is no longer seized of the problem. You may wish to say that much will depend on the attitude of the Cuban Government which so far has not been constructive. If pressed, you may wish to state further that the United States is opposed to Communist control of Cuba and to the military association of the U.S.S.R. with Cuba. We are prepared to support any free choice the Cuban people may make following Castro and to hold out a hope to the Cuban people that the United States would be sympathetic to a change in Cuba. The United States does not, however, intend to invade Cuba in furtherance of this goal.

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Kuznetsov may also raise the subject of the Nassau Agreement. Should he do so, you may wish to say that this agreement exemplifies United States determination to perfect with its allies the defense of the West, which is dedicated to the proposition that the West should draw ever closer together for the protection of common values. The agreement marks a further step along the road toward the unity of the West. In common with other Western defensive steps, this agreement was made against a background of belief that there must be a peaceful solution to outstanding problems. It leaves open the opportunity and the possibility of examining relentlessly and continuously the possibility of disarmament, however discouraging the prospects may be at any given time. The agreement is also in keeping with our policy of preventing the development of independent national nuclear capabilities.

On the general subject of disarmament, you may wish to say that you were encouraged by the letter which you received from Chairman Khrushchev in mid-December because Chairman Khrushchev apparently has accepted the principle of on-site inspections. This is very important because it goes to the heart of a reliable agreement ending nuclear testing and contains the element of assurance which is so vital to the broader development of peaceful relations between our two countries. There are, of course, many questions still to be worked out such as the number of on-site inspections (in which the U.S.S.R. is still talking about two or three when the United States has come down from a number between twelve and twenty to a number between eight and ten), inspection of events in an area in which there are not usually earthquakes, and the number and location of unmanned seismic stations in the U.S.S.R., but none of these appear to be insoluble. You understand that a representative of the U.S.S.R. is planning to meet with Mr. Foster in the near future and you hope that some progress can be made towards resolving these questions.

The United States and the U.S.S.R. are now faced with two choices. The first, which offers long-range security to neither of us, is a continuation of the arms race. The second is to turn down the arms race by working out meaningful measures of disarmament. The working out of a treaty banning nuclear weapons tests is a start down this latter path but there are other measures that we should be working on. These include measures preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons to countries not now possessing them, measures prohibiting the placing in orbit of weapons of mass destruction and finally measures to reduce the risk of war and to guard against surprise attack. Finally, while both countries should work towards the ultimate objective of general and complete disarmament in a peaceful world, we should not forget that

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in the Joint Statement of Agreed Principles for Disarmament Negotiations (negotiated by Mr. McGloay and Mr. Zorin) we agreed to seek to achieve and implement the widest possible agreement at the earliest possible date and to try to obtain agreement on measures of disarmament which could be obtained without prejudicing progress on the total program. As a result it might be fruitful for us to consider what disarmament measures of an intermediate nature might constitute the widest area of agreement which it would appear to be feasible to implement at an early date.

It is suggested that you briefly mention that you have also heard from Chairman Khrushchev with respect to Southeast Asia that you intend shortly to get in touch with him on the matter as you remain seriously concerned at the apparent intention of the North Vietnamese to continue to stir up trouble in Laos and South Vietnam. The United States is fully conforming to our Geneva commitments in spite of Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese charges. We have withdrawn all our military personnel from Laos and we are prepared to withdraw all those who are assisting the South Vietnamese as soon as the North Vietnamese stop their efforts to take them over.

It is suggested that you not take any initiative in raising Berlin or other questions.

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Clearances: S/AL - Ambassador Thompson ^{JC}

EUR:SOV:JCGuthrie:sj:erk (Disarmament Section supplied by ACDA - Mr. Fisher)
Cleared by Mr. Beam and Mr. Foster)

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